



A
GRAMMATICAL
STUDY
of
Romans 16, 17

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by Robert George Hoerber, Ph. D.



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A Grammatical Study of Romans 16, 17

Since September, 1945, the theses published in *A Statement* have caused much discussion in the Synodical Conference and some comment in other circles. As a former member of the Missouri Synod we have followed the developments; as a student of the Greek language and literature we have studied with intense interest the articles available on the fifth thesis.¹ The study indicates that some points

¹ These articles include: *Speaking the Truth in Love*, unsigned writers (The Willow Press, Chicago), pp. 35-44. *An Analysis of "A Statement,"* E. W. A. Koehler. *Romans 16:17-20*, E. W. A. Koehler. *Contrary to the Doctrine Which We Have Learned*, E. W. A. Koehler (mimeographed). *They That Are Such*, E. W. A. Koehler (mimeographed); reprinted in the *Confessional Lutheran*, vol. VII, no. 11 (November, 1946), pp. 130-131. "Zu Rom. 16, 17f," P. E. Kretzmann, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. IV, no. 6 (June, 1933), pp. 413-424. "Foreward," Theo. Laetsch, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. VI, no. 1 (January, 1935), pp. 1-11. "Romans 16, 17-18," Walter A. Schumann, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, vol. 38, no. 4 (October, 1941), pp. 260-272. *Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism*, Adolph A. Brux, pp. 10-24, as reprinted in *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 1 (January, 1942), pp. 9-15. *Christian Prayer and Unionism*, Adolph A. Brux, pp. 1-45 (mimeographed). "The Battle for Romans 16:17-20," Karl Koehler, *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 5 (May, 1942), pp. 11-15; vol. XV, no. 6 (June, 1942), p. 1, pp. 12-16, p. 3; vol. XV, no. 7 (July, 1942), p. 1, pp. 12-15. *Romans*, pp. 108-109 (mimeographed notes from Dr. Wm. Arndt's class in exegesis on Romans). *Two Questions in Reference to Rom. 16, 17-20*, H. Guckenberger (mimeographed). *A Re-examination of Certain Passages Referring to Unionism and Church Fellowship*, unsigned writer, pp. 11-19 (mimeographed). *Exegesis of Romans 16, 17 and 18, and Critical Review of "Essays Related to A Statement," Wherever This Passage Is Concerned*, unsigned writer, pp. 1-19 (mimeographed). *Exegetical Treatise of Rom. 16, 17-18*, unsigned writer, pp. 1-8 (mimeographed). *What Manner of Men Are They?*, Carl Gaeussle, pp. 1-12 (mimeographed). The commentaries consulted include those by: Zahn, Stoeckhardt, Lenski, Hodge, H. A. W. Meyer, Bengel, Olshausen, Philippi, J. Denney (*The Expositor's Greek Testament*), Barnes, Luther (*Der Brief an die Roemer*), J. R. Dummelow (editor of *The One Volume Bible Commentary*), P. E. Kretzmann (*Popular Commentary*), Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Matthew Henry, J. Barmby (*Pulpit Commentary*).

of Greek grammar on which both the "conservatives" as well as the "liberals" base their respective interpretations of Romans 16, 17 lack grammatical foundation. Our colleagues heard an oral presentation of the study and requested that we make the results available for wider circulation. We are offering, therefore, this study in a spirit of humility, with the prayer that it may by the grace of God prove beneficial, and with the hope that all readers approach it with as much Christian love as our colleagues have manifested.

The verse reads: Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν ἣν ἐμάθετε ποιῶντας, καὶ ἐκκλίνετε ἀπ' αὐτῶν. The printed and mimeographed articles which have appeared largely concern several grammatical points of the text. Since the *apparatus criticus* suggests no variant readings which involve these points, the discussion may proceed on the basis of the text as quoted.²

I

The first point which has provoked discussion is the phrase παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν. The writer (who does not sign his name) of chapter five in *Speaking the Truth in Love* argues that the phrase is adverbial because of the absence of τὰ before παρά, which would connect the phrase to the preceding nouns.³ Prof. E. W. A. Koehler, on the other hand, insists that the phrase is adjectival, suggesting that τὰ was omitted because it would agree in gender only with τὰ σκάνδαλα, but not with τὰς διχοστασίας. He also believes that the participle ποιῶντας would occur after τὰ σκάνδαλα if the phrase παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν were an adverbial modifier

² The text as cited is from the edition of Dr. Eberhard Nestle and Dr. Erwin Nestle (Stuttgart: 1932). The *apparatus criticus* for this passage deals only with παρακαλῶ, σκοπεῖν, and ἐκκλίνετε.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 40. Karl Koehler employs the same argument. Cf. "The Battle for Romans 16:17-20," *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 6 (June, 1942), pp. 13-14.

of the participle.⁴ These arguments are not grammatically sound for labeling the phrase as either adjectival or adverbial.

Participles in Greek frequently occur at the end of phrases. Since *ποιῶντας* is a participle, its position at the end of the phrase is quite natural. Likewise, if *τά* were present after *τὰ σκάνδαλα*, it could easily modify both *τὰς διχοστασίας* and *τὰ σκάνδαλα*, although these nouns differ in gender. In such cases several principles may determine the gender of the adjective or article, one of which is that the adjective or article agrees in gender with the nearer or nearest substantive. An elementary Greek grammar, used in many classes for the first year of Greek, has the following sentence, which would be parallel to Romans 16, 17 if *τά* were added after *τὰ σκάνδαλα*: *ἡ δὲ γυνή καὶ οἱ παῖδες οἱ τοῦ ἄρχοντος ἐλαύνουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀμάξης*.⁵ As *οἱ* modifies both preceding nouns although they are of different gender, thus *τά* after *τὰ σκάνδαλα* would modify *τὰς διχοστασίας* as well. One cannot, therefore, insist either that the phrase *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν* is adjectival on the basis of the position of *ποιῶντας* in the sentence or that *τά* was omitted because the preceding substantives differ in gender.

Nor does the omission of *τά* before the phrase *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν* furnish convincing reason for interpreting the phrase as adverbial. There seems to be confusion on this point of Greek grammar. In *Speaking the Truth in Love* the unsigned writer states: "If Paul had wanted to say 'the divisions and offenses which are contrary to the teaching,' he might have been expected to say *τὰ σκάνδαλα τὰ παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν*."⁶ Prepositional phrases modifying sub-

⁴ *Contrary to the Doctrine Which We Have Learned*, p. 1; *Romans 16:17-20*, p. 6.

⁵ *An Introduction to Greek*, H. L. Crosby and J. N. Schaeffer (Allyn and Bacon: 1928), p. 61. Cf. *Greek Grammar*, W. W. Goodwin and C. B. Gulick (Ginn and Company: 1930), p. 202.

⁶ *Speaking the Truth in Love*, p. 40.

stantives without a connecting article are not so unusual as the unsigned writer seems to think. cursory reading of classical Greek prose for only a few hours, without any attempt to locate all the occurrences, has revealed the following examples of prepositional phrases modifying substantives without a connecting article: ⁷

Herodotus V, 108: ἡ ἀγγελία περὶ τῶν Σαρδίων . . .

Xenophon, *Hiero*, 3, 3: . . . λυμαντήρας αὐτοὺς νομίζουσι τῆς τῶν γυναικῶν φιλίας πρὸς τοὺς ἄνδρας εἶναι. . .

Xenophon, *Commentarii*, I, 1, 1: ἡ μὲν γὰρ γραφή κατ' αὐτοῦ τοιάδε τις ἦν. . .

Plato, *Timaeus*, 41c: . . . τρέπεσθε κατὰ φύσιν ὑμεῖς ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ζώων δημιουργίαν, μιμούμενοι τὴν ἐμὴν δύναμιν περὶ τὴν ὑμετέραν γένεσιν.

Thucydides II, 52, 1: Ἐπίεσε δ' αὐτοὺς μᾶλλον πρὸς τῷ ἄρχοντι πόνῳ καὶ ἡ ξυγκομιδὴ ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν ἐς τὸ αἶστυ, καὶ οὐχ ᾗσσαν τοὺς ἐπελθόντας.

Thucydides I, 84, 2: . . . τῶν τε ξὺν ἐπαίνῳ ἐξοτρυνόντων ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐπαιρόμεθα ἡδονῇ...

While all these passages are pertinent to the question at hand, the last citation is extremely pertinent because the construction is so similar to Romans 16, 17. It contains a substantive with the article followed by a prepositional phrase which begins with *παρά* and which modifies the preceding substantive although no connecting article is present. In order that no one may think that this grammatical interpretation betrays partiality, authorized translations read: " . . . we are not carried away by the pleasure of

⁷ Robertson notes the two instances in Herodotus V, 108 and Thucydides II, 52, 1. *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Harper and Brothers: 1931), p. 783.

hearing ourselves cheered on to risks which our judgment condemns . . . ”⁸ “We are not excited by the pleasure afforded by those who with praise stimulate us to dangers contrary to our conviction . . . ”⁹ It is interesting to note that both translators do interpret the phrase beginning with *παρά* as modifying the preceding substantive, although there is no connecting article, and that they do regard the article with the substantive as equivalent to a definite article repeated before *παρά* — the very thing which the unsigned writer in *Speaking the Truth in Love* refuses to do in Romans 16, 17.¹⁰

The New Testament also has numerous instances in which prepositional phrases modify articular substantives without a connecting article. A cursory reading, without any attempt to make an exhaustive search, has supplied the following examples:

Galatians 1, 13: Ἐκούσατε γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφήν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ. . .

Romans 16, 3: ¹¹ Ἀσπάσασθε Πρίσκαν καὶ Ἀκύλαν τοὺς συν-
εργούς μου ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. . .

⁸ *Thucydides*, translated by R. Crawley in the Modern Library series (Random House: 1934), *loc. cit.*

⁹ *The History of the Peloponnesian War by Thucydides*, translated by H. Dale (Harper and Brothers: 1898), *loc. cit.*

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 40-41. In his rejection of the passage thus construed, he misses two points: (1) If the term doctrine refers to the whole body of doctrine, it includes “our Lord’s teaching on offenses”; (2) Just as to “the average Greek . . . τοὺς is a block signal warning him . . . something is coming up, very likely a participle,” so the articles τὰς and τὰ would indicate to the average Greek that the nouns are to be connected with something — either with the prepositional phrase or with something in the immediate context.

¹¹ Cited by Prof. E. W. A. Koehler in his mimeographed article entitled *Contrary to the Doctrine Which We Have Learned* (October 13, 1946), p. 1.

Romans 16, 9: ἀσπάσασθε Οὐρβανὸν τὸν συνεργὸν ἡμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ. . .

Ephesians 2, 15: . . . τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας. . .

II Corinthians 9, 13: . . . ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. . .

II Corinthians 9, 13: . . . ἀπλότῃ τῆς κοινωνίας εἰς αὐτοὺς καὶ εἰς πάντας. . .

Colossians 1, 4: . . . ἀκούσαντες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. . .

Philippians 4, 19: . . . τὸ πλοῦτος αὐτοῦ ἐν δόξῃ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

Ephesians 3, 4: . . . τὴν σύνεσίν μου ἐν τῷ μυστηρίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ . . .

Ephesians 3, 13: . . . ταῖς θλίψεσιν μου ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. . .

Ephesians 1, 15: . . . ἀκούσας τὴν καθ' ὑμᾶς πίστιν ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ. . .

Philippians 1, 26: . . . τῆς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς.

Philippians 3, 9: . . . τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει. . .

Philippians 1, 5: . . . τῇ κοινωνίᾳ ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. . .

Colossians 1, 24: Νῦν χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. . .

Romans 6, 4:¹² συνετάφημεν οὖν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον. . .

¹² Robertson takes the prepositional phrase "into his death" as modifying the noun "baptism" (*op. cit.*, p. 784). For a fuller explanation see the quotation which will follow (*infra*, p. 1").

Romans 4, 1: ¹¹ . . . τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα;

Romans 15, 30: ¹¹ . . . ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν...

Romans 9, 3: ¹¹ . . . τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα. . .

These examples indicate that it is not infrequent in classical Greek and quite frequent in the New Testament for prepositional phrases to modify articular substantives without any connecting article. ¹³ The omission, therefore, of *τά* before *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν* in Romans 16, 17 furnishes little or no reason for interpreting the prepositional phrase as adverbial. One may well query: "Would it be more in keeping with Greek grammar, if *τά* were present before *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν* in Romans 16, 17?" Robertson's explanation of the omission of a connecting article in similar instances is no doubt sound and applicable to Romans 16, 17. "Phrases that are consciously verbal in origin readily do without the repeated article. (¹ W.-Th., p. 136; W.-Sch., p. 180.) So in Ro. 6:3 we have *εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν* and in the next verse we read *συνετάφημεν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος εἰς τὸν θάνατον*. It is plain therefore, that here *εἰς τὸν θάνατον* is to be construed with *βαπτίσματος*, not with *συνετάφημεν*. In other examples the verbal construction appears in other contexts. It is, however, possible that the usage with the verb renders the anarthrous construction more frequent. So Ph. 1:26, *τῇς ἐμῆς παρουσίας πάλιν πρὸς ὑμᾶς*, may be compared with *παρεῖναι πρὸς ὑμᾶς* (Gal. 4:20). Cf. also *παθήματα ὑπὲρ* (Col. 1:24) with *πάσχει ὑπὲρ* (1 Pet. 2:21), *θλίψεις ὑπὲρ* (Eph.

¹¹ Cited by Prof. E. W. A. Koehler in his mimeographed article entitled *Contrary to the Doctrine Which We Have Learned* (October 13, 1946), p. 1.

¹³ For examples of a prepositional phrase modifying an anarthrous substantive without any connecting article cf.: I Timothy 1, 1; 1, 2; Titus 1, 1; 1, 4; Galatians 1, 14; Acts 2, 5; Romans 16, 5; 3, 22; 14, 17; II Corinthians 11, 26; Mark 1, 4; 1, 23.

3:13) with *θλιβόμεθα ὑπέρ* (2 Cor. 1:6). The classic idiom shows similar examples. (²W.-Sch., p. 180.)”¹⁴

The close connection between the noun *σκανδαλον* and the verb *σκανδαλίζω* is pertinent to the interpretation of Romans 16, 17. The fact that this verb occurs at least twenty-nine times¹⁵ in the New Testament seems to make the verbal idea immanent in the term *τὰ σκάνδαλα*. After nouns which are closely related to verbal cognates, the use of a connecting article appears not to have been necessary, as Robertson's statement and examples reveal. It is true that the New Testament nowhere has the phrase *σκανδαλίζω παρά*. But this lack is natural, for the sentences which contain the verb *σκανδαλίζω* in the active voice have as direct object a substantive referring to a person,¹⁶ not to a thing. Likewise, in the sentences in which the passive forms of the verb are modified by the preposition *ἐν*, the preposition is used with a personal pronoun or its equivalent,¹⁷ and not with a non-personal substantive. One may, for example, say, “I offend you,” or “I offend contrary to the teaching I learned”;

¹⁴ Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 784. In Robertson's footnotes W.-Th. refers to Winer-Thayer, *A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament*; W.-Sch. refers to Winer-Schmiedel, *Winer's Grammatik des neutest. Sprachidiom.*

¹⁵ Matthew 5, 29; 5, 30; 11, 6; 13, 21; 13, 57; 15, 12; 17, 27; 18, 6; 18, 8; 18, 9; 24, 10; 26, 31; 26, 33 (twice); Mark 4, 17; 6, 3; 9, 42; 9, 43; 9, 45; 9, 47; 14, 27; 14, 29; Luke 7, 23; 17, 2; John 6, 61; 16, 1; I Corinthians 8, 13 (twice); II Corinthians 11, 29. Some manuscripts have the verb in Romans 14, 21.

¹⁶ *E. g.*, *σε* (Matthew 5, 29; 5, 30; 18, 8; 18, 9; Mark 9, 43; 9, 45; 9, 47); *ὑμᾶς* (John 6, 61); *αὐτοῦς* (Matthew 17, 27); *ἐνα* (Matthew 18, 6; Mark 9, 42; Luke 17, 2); *τὸν ἀδελφόν* (I Corinthians 8, 13).

¹⁷ *E. g.*, *ἐν ἐμοί* (Matthew 11, 6; 26, 31; Luke 7, 23); *ἐν σοί* (Matthew 26, 33); *ἐν αὐτῷ* (Matthew 13, 57; Mark 6, 3). Some mss. have *ἐν ἐμοί* in Mark 14, 27; but Nestles' text does not even include this phrase in the *apparatus criticus*.

but one should not state, "I offend contrary to you," or "I offend the teaching I learned." People offend persons (not things), and contrary to things (not contrary to persons).

The previous paragraph and the preceding quotation from Robertson wish merely to present an additional explanation of why *τά* might have been omitted after *σκάνδαλα*. The foregoing paragraphs and citations furnish ample evidence that the prepositional phrase in Romans 16, 17 could easily modify the substantives without a connecting article. Robertson, moreover, interprets the prepositional phrase in Romans 16, 17 as adjectival. "The verb (predicate) has two accusatives (*ὑμᾶς, σκοπεῖν*). This infinitive *σκοπεῖν* has an object, the articular participle *τοὺς ποιούντας*. This participle *ποιούντας* has two substantives as object and one prepositional adjunct *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν*. The substantive *διδαχὴν* is further described by the relative clause *ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε*. It is all beautifully linked together in a perfectly transparent way radiating from the predicate verb *παρακαλῶ* (the infinitive to the predicate, the participle to the infinitive, the substantives to the participle, the adjunct to the substantives, the relative clause to the adjunct)." ¹⁸ Robertson thus links the phrase *παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν* (referred to as "the adjunct" and "prepositional adjunct") to the substantives.

Observing that in Romans 16, 17 the prepositional phrase may in keeping with good grammatical usage be either adjectival or adverbial, the discussion will proceed to the second point — the classification of the articles before *διχοστασίας* and *σκάνδαλα*.

¹⁸ *A Short Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, Robertson (parts I, III and IV) and Davis (part II) (Richard R. Smith, Inc.: 1931), pp. 200-201. The citation is from part IV. Prof. E. W. A. Koehler also quotes these remarks from an edition by Harper and Brothers (1933) in his mimeographed article *Contrary to the Doctrine Which We Have Learned*, p. 3.

II

The classification of the two articles *τάς* and *τά* has been the subject of some comment and apparently has caused confusion. Many of the "conservatives" seem to argue that these articles are generic, while the "liberals" are prone to insist that they are specific.¹⁹ The following treatment, it is hoped, may prove enlightening and beneficial.

Since there are in Greek two possible classifications of articles modifying a noun (generic or specific) and two possible classifications of a prepositional phrase (adjectival or adverbial), there are mathematically four possible combinations of the article and prepositional phrase in Romans 16, 17. One should, however, remember that although mathematically there are four possible combinations, all four may not be grammatically acceptable. The mathematical possibilities are:

	Prepositional phrase	The articles
	(παρὰ τὴν διδασχὴν)	(τάς, τά)
1.	Adjectival	Generic
2.	Adjectival	Specific
3.	Adverbial	Generic
4.	Adverbial	Specific

Some of the "conservatives" have chosen the first combination, interpreting the prepositional phrase as adjectival and the articles as generic.²⁰ Although this combination

¹⁹ "Zu Roem. 16, 17f," P. E. Kretzmann, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. IV, no. 6 (June, 1933), p. 414; "Romans 16, 17-18," Walter A. Schumann, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, vol. 38, no. 4 (October, 1941), pp. 266-267; *Speaking the Truth in Love*, p. 40; *Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism*, Adolph A. Brux, as reprinted in *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 1 (January, 1942), pp. 11-12.

²⁰ "Zu Roem. 16, 17f," P. E. Kretzmann, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. IV, no. 6 (June, 1933), pp. 414-416; "Romans 16, 17-18," Walter A. Schumann, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, vol. 38, no. 4 (October, 1941), pp. 266-267. For the choice of the "liberals" see *Speaking the Truth in Love*, pp. 40-41.

may be a mathematical possibility, it is not possible grammatically. If the prepositional phrase is adjectival, the articles must be specific; for as soon as an articular substantive is limited by a modifying word or phrase, that substantive and the accompanying article become specific. In order to test this statement the reader should examine the previous pages which give examples of adjectival prepositional phrases from the classical authors and from the New Testament. For example, in Herodotus (V, 108) the message is the specific message concerning Sardis. In Xenophon (*Hiero*, 3, 3) the love is the specific love of the women towards their husbands. In Xenophon's *Commentarii* (I, 1, 1) the indictment is the specific indictment against him (Socrates). And so *ad infinitum* whenever a prepositional phrase is interpreted as adjectival, the modified substantive and article are specific. Thus, if the prepositional phrase in Romans 16, 17 is adjectival, the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ together with their substantives must be specific, and the divisions and offenses are the specific divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. Of the first two combinations listed above, therefore, only the second is grammatically possible.

Another test to show the grammatical impossibility of the first combination is to study *Syntax of Classical Greek* by B. L. Gildersleeve. This work contains the best treatment available on the article in Greek.²¹ The reader will not find any instance of a generic article and noun which is modified by a limiting or restricting word or phrase. Such a combination seems to be contrary to the laws of thought and language.

Perhaps the King James' version, by not translating the articles, has led some to suppose that the articles were

²¹ Published by the American Book Company (part one in 1900, and part two in 1911). The article is discussed on pages 215-332; the generic article on pages 255-259.

generic. This omission has no effect on the classification of the articles. So long as the prepositional phrase is interpreted as adjectival, the preceding nouns and their articles (whether translated into English or not) must be specific. The English translation of Romans 16, 17, if the prepositional phrase is adjectival and the articles are specific, may read in one of the following ways:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark those who cause the divisions and the offenses contrary

or

the divisions and offenses contrary

or

the divisions and the offenses which are contrary

or

the divisions and offenses which are contrary

or

divisions and offenses which are contrary

or

divisions and offenses contrary

to the doctrine which you learned; and avoid them.

Any of these variations is possible if the prepositional phrase is interpreted as adjectival and the articles as specific.

The "liberals," on the other hand, choose the last of the four mathematically possible combinations listed above, insisting that the prepositional phrase is adverbial and the articles specific. Just as, however, the first combination is not possible on a grammatical basis, so the fourth combination is very odd and difficult to accept on the basis of context. It is, to be sure, grammatically possible to have in a sentence an adverbial prepositional phrase plus specific articles and substantives; but one would then expect either the same sentence or the immediate context to make clear to what the specific article is referring. In Romans 16, 17 the articles are left hanging in mid-air if they are taken as specific and the prepositional phrase as adverbial. There is

nothing in this sentence or in the context to which they could refer, if the prepositional phrase were adverbial. The third combination listed above would be by far the clearer of the last two combinations.

Again, the reader should study the previous pages which list examples of specific articles with substantives in classical and New Testament Greek. He will find that in these sentences the specific article is never left hanging in mid-air, but always refers to something. In Herodotus (V, 108), for example, ἡ ἀγγελία does not stand alone; it refers to περὶ τῶν Σαρδίων and means: the message concerning Sardis. Xenophon (*Hiero*, 3, 3) does not permit τῆς...φιλίας to be obscure; he employs two modifying clauses to show that he is speaking of the love of the women towards their husbands. In the *Commentarii* (I, 1, 1) also he does not allow ἡ . . . γραφή to stand unrestricted; he modifies it with the prepositional phrase κατ' αὐτοῦ, thus making it clear that he is referring to the indictment against him (Socrates). Neither does Plato (*Timaeus*, 41c) leave his readers in doubt concerning τὴν . . . δύναμιν; he makes the reference clear by the addition of ἐμὴν and περὶ τὴν ὑμετέραν γένεσιν. Nor does Thucydides (II, 52, 1 and I, 84, 2) permit ἡ ξυγκομιδή and τὰ δεινά to stand alone; he modifies them respectively with the phrases ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν ἐς τὸ ἄστυ and παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν.

In the New Testament examples, likewise, St. Paul does not leave a specific article and substantive hanging in mid-air, but makes it evident to what they refer. In Galatians 1, 13, for example, he does not leave the readers in doubt concerning τὴν . . . ἀναστροφὴν; he clarifies his meaning by the addition of ἐμὴν, ποτε, and ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ. Even in Romans (16, 3 and 16, 9) τοὺς συνεργούς and τὸν συνεργόν have modifying phrases, although the specific individuals are mentioned by name. And so *ad infinitum*, in the remaining passages quoted above, Paul never employs a specific article

and substantive of which the reference is obscure and unmodified.²²

The specific article in Greek is parallel to the specific article in English in respect to its usage. Professor Gildersleeve begins his discussion of the specific article with this statement: "The use of the Individual or Specific Article is so much like the English that only divergencies need be noticed at length."²³ He then proceeds to treat such topics as: article with objects present to the mind; possessive article; article with numerals; article with proper names.²⁴ The paragraph on the article with objects present to the mind²⁵ is pertinent, for the examples show that, even if the specific article and noun are not modified, the context makes it clear to what the specific articular substantive refers. Thus in Andocides (I, 25) οἱ μάρτυρες are the witnesses who have given testimony. In Lysias (I, 11) ὁ . . . ἄνθρωπος is the person who is the subject of the oration, Eratosthenes. The characters in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (129 and 130), by the phrase ὁ πόλεμος ἐρπέτω, are referring to the war which is being discussed in the drama. The context makes manifest that Thucydides (I, 12, 2) refers to the Greek cities in the phrase ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν, and that the phrase τοῦ γενομένου σεισμοῦ (I, 101, 2) has reference to the earthquake in which the Helots and the

²² These passages, cited above, also contain a specific article and substantive: Ephesians 2, 15; II Corinthians 9, 13; Colossians 1, 4; Philippians 4, 19; Ephesians 3, 4; 3, 13; 1, 15; Philippians 1, 26; 3, 9; 1, 5; Colossians 1, 24; Romans 6, 4; 4, 1; 15, 30; 9, 3.

²³ Gildersleeve, *op. cit.*, pp. 226.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 226-255.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 226. The text of the paragraph reads: "Like the English the Attic article (Prof. Gildersleeve is speaking of the specific article) is used of objects that are present to the mind or senses, well-known, notorious, expected, recurring, customary, — the Anaphoric Article or Article of Reference."

Thuriats and Aethaeans of the Perioeci seceded to Ithome. The context makes clear that ἡ ζημία in Demosthenes (XX, 167) refers to the penalty for those who counterfeit money. The specific articular substantive τῇ μάχῃ in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (I, 2, 9) has reference to the battle of Salamis in 480 B. C., in which Xerxes was defeated and then departed from Greece. These are all the citations in Gildersleeve's paragraph. In none does the specific article and its noun hang in mid-air, leaving the readers uncertain as to what it refers. In each one, on the contrary, the specific articular noun refers to something in the context, when it is not modified by any word or phrase.

If the articles τὰς and τὰ in Romans 16, 17 are specific, the prepositional phrase must then be adjectival on the basis of context. The American editor of H. A. W. Meyer's commentary has this note: "The articles with διχοστασίας and σκάνδαλα, the addition to those words of παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν κ.τ.λ., and the words in ver. 18 descriptive of the persons alluded to, indicate that Paul has in mind opposers of his doctrine."²⁶ Note that he interprets the prepositional phrase as adjectival, or as an addition to διχοστασίας and σκάνδαλα, evidently because of the articles with these nouns. Otherwise, if the articles were specific and the prepositional phrase adverbial, the articles would be obscure, since neither the sentence nor the context would make clear to what they would refer.

If the prepositional phrase, on the other hand, is adverbial, the articles should be taken as generic because there is nothing else in the sentence or context with which to connect them. To understand this point more clearly two passages from Thucydides should be studied. The one (I, 84, 2) has been cited previously. The articular substantive

²⁶ *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Romans*, H. A. W. Meyer, translated by Moore and Johnson, revised and edited by W. P. Dickson (Funk and Wagnalls: 1889), p. 582.

τὰ δεινά, according to the two authorized translators quoted above, is specific because the prepositional phrase *παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν* is taken as adjectival, making manifest to what the specific articular substantive refers—i. e., “to risks which our judgment condemns,” or “to dangers contrary to our conviction.” The other passage from Thucydides which is pertinent to the question at hand reads (III, 45, 6): *καὶ ἡ τύχη ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς οὐδὲν ἔλλασον ξυμβάλλεται ἐς τὸ ἐπαίρειν*. . . The same two authorized translators interpret the prepositional phrase *ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς* as adverbial. Since there is then nothing in the sentence or context to which the article *ἡ* could refer, they must take the article as generic and translate as follows: “Fortune, too, powerfully helps the delusion”;²⁷ “Fortune, too, aids them no less in urging men on.”²⁸ If the prepositional phrase, however, were adverbial and the article were specific, the articular noun would be hanging in mid-air, referring to nothing in the sentence or context.

In Romans 16, 17, therefore, the fourth combination (adverbial prepositional phrase plus the articles *τάς* and *τά* as specific) is equally impossible on the basis of context as is the first combination (adjectival prepositional phrase and generic articles) on the basis of grammar. According to grammatical rules the articles *τάς* and *τά* must be specific if the prepositional phrase is adjectival (the second combination); according to the context the articles should be generic if the prepositional phrase is adverbial (the third combination). The translation of Romans 16, 17, according to the second combination, may read thus (or with the possible variations noted previously on page 16):

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark those who cause the divisions and the offenses contrary to the doctrine which you learned; and avoid them.

²⁷ R. Crawley, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

²⁸ H. Dale, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*

If the passage is translated according to the third combination, the rendering would be something like the following:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark those who, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, cause divisions and offenses; and avoid them.

To substantiate further the rejection of the fourth combination, two facts may be noted. In the first place the writer of the fifth chapter of *Speaking the Truth in Love* evidently realized that, if the prepositional phrase is interpreted as adverbial and the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ as specific, these articles and their nouns would stick out like a sore thumb. He, therefore, added to the text and translated as follows: "I urge you, brethren, to keep an eye on those who, contrary to the teaching which you have learned, are creating the divisions and the offenses (known to all of us)" ²⁹ He made this addition although the context does not warrant it and although "sound exegetical and hermeneutical principles" do not allow a translator to make any additions which are not necessary or warranted by the context. In the second place no standard commentary to which there has been access adopts such a translation or accepts the fourth combination. ³⁰ The unsigned writer (and maybe also some of the individuals who originally and more recently signed *A Statement* would agree) seems to stand alone in this translation and combination.

There remain, then, the second and third combinations of the prepositional phrase and the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$. Also

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

³⁰ The commentaries which were consulted include those by: Zahn, Stoeckhardt, Lenski, Hodge, H. A. W. Meyer, Bengel, Olshausen, Philippi, J. Denney (*The Expositor's Greek Testament*), Barnes, Luther (*Der Brief an die Römer*), J. R. Dummelov (editor of *The One Volume Bible Commentary*), P. E. Kretzmann (*Popular Commentary*), Jamieson-Fausset-Brown, Matthew Henry, J. Barmby (*Pulpit Commentary*).

✓ the third combination, however, presents a difficulty which merits explanation.⁸¹ A study of Gildersleeve's *Syntax of Classical Greek*⁸² teaches that the Greek definite article may be used substantively (*e. g.*, ὁ μὲν . . . ὁ δέ) or adjectively.

• The adjectival use is divided into the specific article and the generic article. Since there are both concrete and abstract nouns and since each may occur in the singular or plural there are mathematically the following eight possibilities:

- A. The specific article with a concrete noun in the singular
- B. The specific article with a concrete noun in the plural
- C. The specific article with an abstract noun in the singular
- D. The specific article with an abstract noun in the plural
- E. The generic article with a concrete noun in the singular
- F. The generic article with a concrete noun in the plural
- G. The generic article with an abstract noun in the singular
- H. The generic article with an abstract noun in the plural.

⁸¹ The discussion will concern only a grammatical difficulty. There are also other difficulties; *e. g.*, the text according to the third combination would seem to include all theologians who have been instrumental in causing any divisions in the church — including Luther.

⁸² *Op. cit.*, pp. 215-332; especially pp. 215-259.

Examples of combinations A-G are customary in Greek literature:

- A. τοῦτον γὰρ πρῶτον μὲν ὁ ἐμὸς πατὴρ ἔδωκεν ὑπήκοον εἶναι ἐμοί . . . (Xenophon, *Anabasis*, I, 6, 6.)³³
- B. ἐνταῦθα οἱ μὲν ἄλλοι στρατιῶται ἐπὶ τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἦσαν· οἱ δὲ στρατηγοὶ πάλιν συνήλθον . . . (Xenophon, *Anabasis*, III, 5, 14.)
- C. τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν οὐ μόνον τὸ μὴ προκατεγνωκέναι μηδέν, οἷδὲ τὸ τὴν εὐνοίαν ἴσῃν ἀποδοῦναι, ἀλλὰ τὸ καὶ τῇ τάξει καὶ τῇ ἀπολογίᾳ, ὥς βεβούληται καὶ προήρηται τῶν ἀγωνιζομένων ἕκαστος, οὕτως ἔασαι χρήσασθαι. (Demosthenes, XVIII, 2.)
- D. . . ἄλλ' ὁρῶν ὅτι τὰς αἰτίας καὶ τὰς διαβολάς, αἷς ἐκ τοῦ πρότερος λέγειν ὁ διώκων ἰσχύει, ἐν τῷ φεύγοντι παρελθεῖν. . . (Demosthenes, XVIII, 7.)
- E. . . ὀρθῶς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπος ὠνομάσθη, ἀναθρῶν ἂ ὅπωπε. (Plato, *Cratylus*, 399c.)³⁴
- F. οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τὰς ἀκοὰς τῶν προγεγενημένων. . . ἄβασανίστως παρ' ἀλλήλων δέχονται. (Thucydides I, 20, 1.)³⁵
- G. ἥ τε ἐλπίς καὶ ὁ ἔρως . . . πλείστα βλάπτουσι. . . (Thucydides III, 45, 5.)

³³ The use of the Greek article in combinations A-D is the same as the use of the article in English. Cf. Gildersleeve, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

³⁴ The generic article would not be translated into English in this sentence. However, the generic article is used "in English to a certain extent: 'He played *the* villain,' 'acted *the* simpleton,' 'was not *the* gentleman,' '*the* horse,' '*the* cow,' '*the* ox,' and the animals generally. The plural is foreign to our idiom." Gildersleeve, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

³⁵ The article is not translated into English in combinations F and G.

But combination H — “ay, there’s the rub.” As in English the generic article is found neither with concrete nouns in the plural nor with abstract nouns in the singular or plural, so it appears that in Greek the generic article is never joined with abstract nouns in the plural. We have within the past five years read the complete works of Plato in the Oxford text at least five times and the so-called Socratic dialogues, including the *Republic*, at least ten times.³⁶ Plato uses the generic article with abstract nouns no doubt more than any other Greek author, and especially in the so-called Socratic dialogues. We have no recollection, however, of ever seeing a generic article with an abstract noun in the plural in Plato or in any other Greek author. Gildersleeve has no reference to any instance of a generic article with an abstract noun in the plural in Greek literature.³⁷ Nor does Spieker³⁸ or Goodwin and Gulick³⁹ or Hadley and Allen⁴⁰ or Kuehner⁴¹ cite any such example. Also in I Corinthians 13, in which chapter St. Paul employs the generic article with an abstract noun (ἡ ἀγάπη), the abstract noun is always in the singular.

Both διχοστασίας and σκάνδαλα in Romans 16, 17 are abstract nouns in the plural. On the basis of the above evidence, then, we cannot without hesitation interpret the articles τὰς and τὰ as generic. The combination, therefore,

³⁶ Our doctoral dissertation was based on Plato: *The Theme of Plato's Republic*, Robert George Hoerber (Eden Publishing House, St. Louis: 1944).

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 257-259.

³⁸ *Greek Prose Composition*, E. H. Spieker (American Book Company: 1904), p. 14.

³⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 206, paragraph 942; cf. footnote no. 5.

⁴⁰ *A Greek Grammar*, J. Hadley and F. Allen (American Book Company: 1884) pp. 216-217.

⁴¹ *Grammar of the Greek Language*, R. Kuehner, translated by Edwards and Taylor (D. Appleton and Company: 1879), p. 314.

by which the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ are interpreted as generic and the prepositional phrase as adverbial must, for the present at least, also be ruled out in Romans 16, 17.

III

The interpretation of the grammatical terms specific article and generic article has caused confusion in the discussion of Romans 16, 17, as well as the classification of the definite articles as either generic or specific. The confusion perhaps has arisen from a misconception of the meaning of these terms and a misunderstanding of several pages of Robertson's *A Grammar of the New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*.

As soon as the expression specific article is mentioned some of the recent writers immediately think that they then must translate the article with the phrase "the well-known."⁴² Such is far from the usual meaning of the term specific article. Gildersleeve in fact states: "The use of the Individual or Specific Article is so much like the English that only divergencies need be noticed at length."⁴³ In order to become clear on this point the reader once again should examine the statements from Herodotus, Xenophon, Plato, Thucydides, and the New Testament cited previously (on pages 6 - 9). If each specific article were translated "the well-known," he would easily observe from the idiotic translations that the usual meaning of a specific article is not "the well-known." Or the reader may pick at random any paragraph, page, or pages from any section of Greek literature and try to translate every specific article with the phrase "the well-known." Again the foolish translation which would result from such an attempt should convince him that the

⁴² *Speaking the Truth in Love*, pp. 40, 42; *Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism*, Adolph A. Brux, as reprinted in *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 1 (January, 1942), pp. 9, 12.

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 226.

usual meaning of the specific article in Greek is not "the well-known," but merely the word "the."

Professor Gildersleeve lists as a *divergency* the occasionally possible translation of the specific article as "the well-known."⁴⁴ The two examples and the translations he gives are:

Thucydides I, 101, 2: διεκωλύθησαν δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ γενομένου σεισμοῦ — "They were prevented by the occurrence of the well-known (great) earthquake."

Xenophon, *Anabasis*, I, 2, 9: Ξέρξης ὅτε ἐκ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἡττηθεὶς τῇ μάχῃ ἀπεχώρει — "after having been defeated in the (famous) battle."

These two examples show that, although "the well-known" is an occasionally possible meaning of the specific article, a translator has no right to interpret the specific article thus in order to avoid its hanging in mid-air without any clarification in the context. For the context of each of these examples makes evident to what the specific articular substantives refer. Thucydides is speaking of the earthquake in which the Helots and the Thuriats and Aethaeans of the Perioeci seceded to Ithome; Xenophon has reference to the battle of Salamis in 480 B. C., in which Xerxes was defeated and then departed from Greece.

Since, as Gildersleeve points out, the use of the specific article in Greek is parallel to the use of the specific article in English, examples in English may be instructive. If a person writes, "I have read the treatises of Plato," the specific definite article does not mean only the well-known treatises of Plato, but also those discourses infrequently read today, such as the *Minos* and *Epinomis*. The usual meaning of the specific definite article in English as in Greek is merely "the," not "the well-known." An occasionally possible meaning of the specific article also in

⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 226. Cf. *supra*, pp. 18-19.

English may be "the well-known," as in the sentence: "Plato in the treatise (*The Republic*) speaks of a community of women, children and possessions." It is the context which gives to the definite article in this sentence as well as in Greek the possible meaning of "the well-known." For the context, either by citing the title or by the reference to a community of women, children and possessions, makes clear that the reference is to *The Republic*, which has become the well-known dialogue of Plato. The usual meaning of the specific article is merely "the" and the context alone can give the added connotation of "the well-known." An attempt to avoid its hanging in mid-air without clarification in the context cannot give such an additional connotation.

Some of the writers on the side of the "conservatives," on the other hand, seem to think that the articles *τάς* and *τά* in Romans 16, 17 must be generic because, if not, the warning would not extend to all false teachers.⁴⁵ This idea reveals a misconception of the expression generic article. "The principle of the generic article," as Gildersleeve affirms, "is the selection of a representative or normal individual."⁴⁶ The prohibition in Romans 16, 17 extends to all false teachers even if the articles are specific. For example, in the sentence in the previous paragraph, "I have read the treatises of Plato," the article is unquestionably specific. Yet it still includes all the treatises of Plato and cannot be limited to only certain particular treatises of Plato, unless the context reveals such limitation.

When one employs the terms specific article and generic article, it is necessary to realize that these terms are related to the words species and genus, respectively, and do

⁴⁵ "Romans 16, 17-18," Walter A. Schumann, *Theologische Quartalschrift*, vol. 38, no. 4 (October, 1941), pp. 266-267; "Zu Roem. 16, 17f," P. E. Kretzmann, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. IV, no. 6 (June, 1933), pp. 414-416.

⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 255.

not have the connotation of "well-known" or general. Failure to observe this distinction appears to be one of the primary reasons for the existing confusion.

Statements in Robertson's *A Grammar of the New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* have also been incorrectly applied in the discussions concerning Romans 16, 17, as supposed proof both that the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ are generic and that they are specific.

Robertson discusses "the method employed by the article" under three headings: ⁴⁷

- (a) It distinguishes individuals from individuals.
- (b) It distinguishes classes from other classes.
- (c) It distinguishes qualities from other qualities.

Towards the end of this discussion he has the statement: "In Ro. 16:17 . . . note how neatly $\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$, $\tau\acute{\alpha}$, $\tau\acute{\eta}\nu$ come in and illustrate the three uses of the article." Also on the same page he twice refers the reader to Gildersleeve for the generic article. An incorrect association of the two references to Gildersleeve and Robertson's statement on Romans 16, 17 perhaps has caused some to suppose that Robertson takes the articles as generic. ⁴⁸ This supposition, however, is incorrect because Robertson's discussion is not limited to the generic article. In fact in many of the examples he cites, the article is specific; *e. g.*, "the pinnacle of the temple," "the mountain," "the son of the carpenter," "the members which are on earth." ⁴⁹ The inclusion of the article $\tau\acute{\eta}\nu$ in the statement on Romans 16, 17 proves conclusively that the statement is no basis for the assumption that Robertson takes the articles as generic, for the article

⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 756-758.

⁴⁸ "Zu Roem. 16, 17f," P. E. Kretzmann, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, vol. IV, no. 6 (June, 1933), p. 414.

⁴⁹ Matthew 4, 5; 5, 1; 13, 55; Colossians 3, 5.

τήν, which is modified by the relative clause ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε, is undoubtedly specific.

The statement of Robertson, "Whenever the Greek article occurs, the object is certainly definite," likewise has been incorrectly applied as proof that the articles are specific.⁵⁰ The writer of the fifth chapter of *Speaking the Truth in Love* makes the following four remarks on the same page:⁵¹

"'Whenever the Greek article occurs, its object certainly is definite,' says Robertson (op. cit. p. 756)."⁵²

"Creating what? 'The definite divisions and offenses of which the Romans were aware?' No, that will have to be generic, too; 'any divisions and any offenses'."

"As a result we have four definite articles (every Greek article whether deictic, or generic, is definite)
... "⁵³

"Let us, therefore, understand the τὰς διχοστασίας and the τὰ σκάνδαλα in their normal sense as indicating definite manifestations well-known to the Romans either from their own experience or from travelers' reports."

⁵⁰ Robertson, *op. cit.*, p. 756.

⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁵² Unless the unsigned writer is using a different edition of Robertson, he has been careless in his quotation; he quotes "its object certainly is" for "the object is certainly."

⁵³ The use of the term deictic is unfortunate. Robertson states clearly: "The article, unlike the demonstrative, does not point out the object as far or near. It is not deictic." (*Op. cit.*, p. 755.) This confusion of terminology may have led the writer to italicize the articles in Zahn's translation, although such liberty should not be taken unless acknowledgment is made (*Speaking the Truth in Love*, p. 40). It should be acknowledged that Dr. S. C. Ylvisaker called attention to the fact that Zahn does not italicize the articles.

The incorrect application of Robertson involves the connotation of the word definite. The following outline will make the point clear:

- I. The indefinite article (a, an)
- II. The definite article (the)
 - A. The specific use of the definite article
 - B. The generic use of the definite article.

The Greek language has no indefinite article. Robertson's statement, therefore, is correct: "Whenever the Greek article occurs, the object is certainly definite." He is using the word definite in the sense of II in contrast to I. But how do the four remarks, quoted above from *Speaking the Truth in Love*, use the term definite? On the same page the connotation is changed three times. The first remark uses the term definite in the sense of II in contrast to I. The second remark changes the connotation of the term to IIA in distinction from IIB. The third remark changes the meaning back to II in contrast to I. The fourth remark again changes the meaning to IIA in distinction from IIB. This confusion of terminology also has perhaps been instrumental in the incorrect interpretation of the term specific article and in the misconception that the phrase specific article implies something well-known.

IV

There has been no discussion concerning the classification of the article τήν in Romans 16, 17. Since it is modified by the relative clause ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε, the article must be the specific use of the definite article. The misconception of the meaning of the term specific article, however, has resulted in much argument concerning the interpretation of the phrase τήν διδασχάν. Some assert that Paul had in mind the Judaizers, when writing the sentence, and meant by this

term the doctrine of justification.⁵⁴ Others claim that the apostle was referring to the Antinomians;⁵⁵ then διδαχή would be the doctrine of law and gospel. Still others insist that Paul was thinking of quarrelsome persons and that διδαχή is the doctrine of unity, offense, or Christian love.⁵⁶

The meaning of the Greek noun διδαχή offers no particular difficulty. The new edition of Liddell and Scott defines it as teaching;⁵⁷ it appears in that sense in Herodotus, Thucydides and Plato.⁵⁸ The usage in the New Testament shows the same meaning. Yet the interpretation of the phrase τὴν διδαχὴν seems to give trouble partly because, as is frequently the case, readers of any ancient document are prone to interpret the same in the light of their own intellectual background and social experience. Today readers are quick to think of the systematized doctrines in the books on dogmatics when they see the phrase "the doctrine." Then the question arises, "To what doctrine is Paul referring?" St. Paul, however, never read Dr. Francis Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* or other similar treatises. The doctrine, teaching, or instruction which he taught included the doctrine of God, the doctrine of sin, the doctrine of the person of Christ, the doctrine of justification, the

⁵⁴ *Christian Prayer-Fellowship and Unionism*, Adolph A. Brux, as reprinted in *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 1 (January, 1942), pp. 12-15. Cf. *Romans 16:17-20*, E. W. A. Koehler, p. 5; *An Analysis of "A Statement,"* E. W. A. Koehler, pp. 3-15.

⁵⁵ E. g., Lightfoot, as referred to in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. II, p. 721.

⁵⁶ "The Battle for Romans 16:17-20," Karl Koehler, *Faith-Life*, vol. XV, no. 6 (June, 1942), pp. 14-15; vol. XV, no. 7 (July, 1942), pp. 12, 15. *Speaking the Truth in Love*, p. 41.

⁵⁷ *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Liddell and Scott, revised and augmented by Jones and McKenzie (Oxford at the Clarendon Press: 1940), *loc. cit.*

⁵⁸ Herodotus III, 134; Thucydides I, 120; IV, 126; Plato, *Republic*, 536d.

doctrine of sanctification, the doctrine of the means of grace, the doctrine of law and gospel, the doctrine of Christian love, *etc.*

✓ The interpretation of the phrase τὴν διδαχὴν becomes more troublesome if reference is made to the article as if it, being specific, would single out a particular phase of Paul's teaching. The specific article τὴν does not limit the noun διδαχὴν to any single doctrine of systematized dogmatics; it merely connects the noun with the relative clause ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε. The context limits the noun only by the clause, "which you learned." Did the Christians at Rome learn only the doctrine of law and gospel, or only the doctrine of Christian love, or only the doctrine of justification? Or were they instructed in all the teaching of the apostles and prophets? To whom would St. Paul apply these words? Would he wish the Christians at Rome to avoid only those people who insisted on circumcision and to join with those who denied the resurrection of Christ?⁵⁹ Would Paul be pleased if the Christians at Rome shunned only the quarrelsome individuals and extended the hand of fellowship to those who denied that Jesus was the Son of God? The answers to these questions are obvious. The confusion arises when an attempt is made to interpret a specific article as implying only one single phase of St. Paul's teaching or only one single doctrine as catalogued in systematized dogmatics. The specific use of the definite article, as observed previously, can infer "the well-known" only when the context gives such permission. In Romans 16, 17 the only limitation in the context to the phrase τὴν διδαχὴν is the relative clause "which you learned."

⁵⁹ Cf. Acts 15, 5: "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Note the phrase "certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed," if any one should assume that all Judaizers were outside the pale of Christianity.

The other passage of the Epistle to the Romans in which Paul employs the noun διδαχή substantiates the previous findings: ⁶⁰

. . . ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς . . .

Note the parallelism between this statement and Romans 16, 17-20, not only between the use of the noun διδαχή, but also the parallel thought in the two verbs, παρεδόθητε and ἐμάθετε, and the parallelism between the verb ὑπηκούσατε and the noun ὑπακοή (16, 19). The Christians at Rome received and learned the entire teaching of Christianity; they obeyed the teaching and their obedience to the teaching (not only to one phase of it) was spread abroad.

⁶⁰ Romans 6, 17.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, then, this grammatical study, which was begun and carried on without any premeditated goal and with a sincere attempt for scholarly impartiality, substantiates "the fathers'" interpretation of Romans 16, 17. The specific use of the definite articles before the substantives divisions, offences, and doctrine do not imply particular divisions and offenses in the sense of well-known and obvious, or a particular phase of doctrine. The articles τὰς and τὰ, taken as specific articles, link their respective nouns to the phrase παρὰ τὴν διδαχὴν and mean "the divisions and the offenses contrary to the doctrine." The specific article τὴν merely connects the noun διδαχὴν with the relative clause ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε, limiting the thought to "the doctrine which you learned." St. Paul is admonishing the Christians at Rome to avoid, not all who cause divisions and offenses, but those who cause the divisions and offenses contrary to the teaching — not contrary to any teaching, but to the teaching which they learned from him and the other apostles.

There has not been included in this study a grammatical treatment of Romans 16, 18-20, or a detailed application of verses 17-20, although verse 17 is intimately connected with verses 18-20, because that has been done ably by others, *e. g.*, Drs. Stoeckhardt, Lenski, E. W. A. Koehler, P. E. Kretzmann, *etc.* The purpose of this study is not to reiterate what already correctly appears in print, but to clarify certain points of grammar which have been misconceived, incorrectly applied, and naturally have led to serious disagreement. Yes, naturally; for we would also, for example, object to the construing of the articles $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ as generic, if we were among the "forty-four." Likewise, if we were in the opposite camp, we would object to any interpretation which would, for example, compel the same articles to hang in mid-air with a connotation of "the well-known," without any such permission from the context. An agreement and a correct unified interpretation of Romans 16, 17-20 can be reached only, with the help of God, on the basis of a clarification of grammatical terminology and its application.

This study, therefore, is being offered with a plea and a prayer. The plea is that the writers quoted-not take it amiss if some of their statements were criticized, for usually their articles proved more worthy of comment than many which were not cited. The prayer is that this study be received, as it has been written, in a spirit of humility and Christian love and with a sincere effort to know the truth as contained in the Holy Spirit's admonition of Romans 16, 17-20. If this study, by the grace of God, assists in the least to clarify the existing disagreement, both the plea and the prayer will have been answered. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

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